



Q For Treason 10

Exploring British Columbia Ghost Towns



This zine is about me going to look at some British Columbia ghost towns and semi-ghost towns (it's the technical term). It's a personal/travel zine but I've also tried to put a little info in about the places and also about finding them and what is there. There is not a whole lot of historical information because lots of books and websites already cover that, and I have a list of them at the back.

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-Reece



Sign in Coalmont: Warning to all doorstepsalesmen— especially those selling magazines, encyclopedias and fire-bells your safe passage is not guaranteed in this village. Women beware! There is a predominance of bachelors living here.

Most of the traveling I had done until now focused around major cities, speeding from Edmonton to Winnipeg, to meet up with friends, or going across Canada, staying in Toronto, Montreal, Halifax, St. John's. This time was different due both to my interest in seeing smaller places and also time restraints since I am a librarian now and actually have work commitments and stuff. I had been stirring around the thoughts of traveling to small places for a year or so, but when I started taking ghost town books and movies out from the library, and seeing what British Columbia has to offer in terms of ghost towns, my heart was set. I wanted to go on a ghost town excursion. Or excursions.

Part i

Since most of the hitchhiking I have done has been between Alberta cities, or has been long-distance and on major highways I had no idea how successful or unsuccessful my traveling plans would be. I started with a small trip, aiming to go to Blakeburn, which is an abandoned mining town near Princeton. I chose Blakeburn for a couple reasons. First, it is not far from Vancouver, where I live, and in this initial trip I only had 4 days, tops. Also, an entire book was written on Blakeburn, including historical information and pictures that were current when the book was published in the 1980s. Ghost towns are infinitely more interesting to me when I have read a little about them. Without the history, they are just rotting shacks in the woods, and scraps of metal. In addition to those reasons, there is also a Blakeburn blog which encouraged me to think that there would be something left of Blakeburn to see, but also that there might not be for long, since according to the blog Blakeburn is being destroyed piece by piece by logging in the area. A committee of people is lobbying to get heritage status for the site, but who knows how long that will take.

Coalmont

The first leg of my trip was to hitchhike to Coalmont, a village within walking distance of Blakeburn. Coalmont is listed as a ghost town by many of the books on the subject because it boomed with the coal industry and mines nearby and is now much, much smaller. There are still some people that live there, however so it is not a true ghost town. I started out hitchhiking in the evening after work. Vancouver is not the easiest place to get a ride out of, even after a long bus ride out into the suburbs. After a bit of a wait, a jeep screeched to a halt just behind me. A smiling guy with long hair got out of the passenger seat so I could slip into the back, and as I was getting in the driver swore and acted all disgruntled for no apparent reason. As soon as I got in he turned up the

ACDC really loud and asked where I was going and that sort of thing. He seemed pissed and then told me that I was lucky to get a ride 'cause he only stopped because he thought I was a girl. I am a big fan of the loud music when I get picked up because it means there is less pressure to make conversation. This was pretty good stuff too, hard rock and metal mostly that I could sung along to, though I held back. The driver was an asshole to his friend too, making him get him beers by throwing the empty cans at the guy and stuff like that. They dropped me off in Bridal Falls, outside of Chilliwack. That night I slept outside of Dinotown, "Canada's only Cartoon Dinosaur Theme Park". It looked kind of second-rate to me, but I couldn't complain about the convenient highway access, and I got to sleep on some grass by a small stream. Rad!

The next morning I got a ride to the turn off where I would have to take a smaller road to Coalmont. As the person giving me a ride was driving along, he pointed out the road I would be on, which was running parallel to the highway briefly. It was dirt. He asked if I had long to go on it, thinking I would walk it. I looked down at the sheet of directions I had printed out from Google Maps and responded that I had 47 km. I got out and walked down to the road, which was unnamed both on my directions and on the street itself. A single beat up pickup drove past me



Sign in Coalmont: You are approaching the peaceful little village of ...
 Coalmont Population: varies. Industry: none. Chief sports: sleeping and day dreaming. Climate: hot-cold-wet-dry- at various times. All clubs and lodges meet at midnight on the sixth Tuesday of every month.
 Coalmont welcomes you and will be delighted to serve you provided you are lucky enough to find us open.

in the opposite direction. Other than that, there was no traffic so I started walking. I figured if I had to walk for 10 hours it would just be an adventure. After 30 minutes and no more traffic, I came to a fork in the road. Now the directions just said to go straight, but it was unclear which fork was "straight". A more major looking street veered to the right but it had a sign which stated that only authorized traffic was allowed on that road. The road that veered to the left looked even smaller and less cared-for than the one I was on, but I figured it must be the one. After walking on it for a few minutes I noticed what looked like a road block ahead. Behind the gate looked to be some animals. As I got closer I saw a small herd of cattle and a deer milling about behind the metal gate. The road was closed to traffic. At this point I decided it might be smart to head back to the rental cabins I saw a while back on the road and ask about directions. It was just starting to get warm a little after 9AM, and I could tell it was going to be a hot day. Back at the cabins, I found my way to the office and decided to sit outside and wait until they opened at 10. After sitting and eating a small snack, I saw some movement outside one of the cabins and called out to an older gentleman getting something out of a shed. I asked him for direction to Coalmont and he told me I could go the back roads way by "following that road", same as my directions stated, but also that I could take highways 3 and 5 to get to Princeton, and from there it would not be far until Coalmont. Turns out I shouldn't have left home in such a hurry, without checking the directions I printed out since this was a much better option. He mentioned something about mining, so I decided to mention that I was actually headed towards Blakeburn, outside of Coalmont, and he shook his head and said he had checked it out some years ago and that not much was left of the town. I am too stubborn to discourage, though, so I headed out still enthusiastic for the adventure. I ended up taking a very scenic route since I had changed the way I was getting to Coalmont, and missed the turnoff to Princeton that would have been much more direct. It was not a bad thing though, because the area there is actually very scenic, even just off the highway. I got a ride in a nice sedan with a family man who was racing his family from Calgary who were flying out. He seemed really interested in hearing about the ghost town I was heading to, and couldn't get over that I was just going there by myself to check it out, and that it wasn't a tourist attraction or anything.

I sped along, getting rides easily from aging hippies and business men. A man named Pete from outside of Princeton picked me up and told me to get a burger at the Coalmont hotel owned by a big guy with a big cigar also named Pete. A friendly local farmer picked me up in a old truck with no roof or doors. I was close to Coalmont, walking on a smallish road and figuring that it wouldn't be so bad to walk the rest of the way when a small car pulled over. The two men inside, a burly father and son were heading right to Coalmont. The father was gruff, and his black sleeveless shirt showed off his blurry tattoos. The son was also dressed in a

sleeveless black shirt but bubbled over in enthusiastic conversation. I told them I was going to see Blakeburn and the father replied that there was nothing left to see, and that Granite City was where I should go. He said that Blakeburn was 10 miles out of Coalmont where as Granite City was a short walk and that there was actually something left of it. He also mentioned that he owned the hotel in Coalmont, making him likely the Pete that the last Pete told me about. I didn't want to eat a burger though. As we pulled into Coalmont I thanked them for the ride, and saw the sign to Blakeburn that said "10". I was hoping it was kilometres. It was an old, wooden painted sign, and I tried to figure out if Canada used to use miles instead of kilometres. I asked them if Blakeburn was just at the end of Blakeburn road and they replied to ask the locals, they just worked here.

Granite City

I walked through the quiet village, which was filled with regular houses and regular lawns, and was glad I didn't listen to the books that said that Coalmont was itself a ghost town. I saw a woman outside and asked her about Granite City, and she told me it was just a kilometre down the road. For no particular reason, I decided I would ask someone else instead of her about Blakeburn. I walked down the country road, looking at the few houses along the way, and wondered what it would be like to live just down the street from a ghost town. I tried to picture Granite City in my mind. I had not read about this town, but the father and son had been pretty insistent that it was worth seeing. All I could think of was old pictures of dusty cowboy towns in the wild west. I saw a fading wooden sign pointing to Granite City on my right, and to my left was a nicely maintained trailer park. I tried to figure out where on my right the sign was pointing to, since Blakeburn road sort of went that way, but also veered off a little, and there was a little path there as well. I decided the path would be the way to go, and then noticed that there were a couple of mostly dilapidated wooden cabins in the field where the path cut across. I realized that this might be Granite City. My first thought was not disappointment at Granite City, but wonder at what would be left of Blakeburn if that was nothing compared to this "town". I thought perhaps there was more to the city, so I walked across the field and came to a memorial that said this is where Granite City had been. So that was that. I read the plaque on the small monument about a cowboy who became rich in the town, one of many to optimistically add "city" onto their town name, looking forward to a time when they would be more than a village. Part of Granite City's problem was that it was in a maintained field across from a bunch of RVs. Part of the magic of ghost towns is the struggle to get there, and the lack of care given them, I decided. I wanted the adventure of trekking to Blakeburn even if there was nothing left.

Blakeburn

I asked a man in a car for directions to Blakeburn but he didn't know where it was, he just stayed there in his RV. I was slightly concerned about finding the place since the man I talked to who told me how to get to Coalmont by highway said that he had a difficult time finding it, and had passed it by three times before finding it. I figured that he probably missed it because he was in a car, though, and hadn't he said it was dark by the time he got there? I also thought I remembered the book on Blakeburn mentioning a sign of some sort.

I started walking up the hill, up Blakeburn Rd., sidetracking for a few minutes to look at the Granite City graveyard which was interestingly still being added to. Shiny new graves were mixed in with plain anonymous old markers, and stones with intricately carved, water-softened edges. I thought briefly about getting more water somewhere, but there was nowhere to go really, unless I asked someone in a trailer. I decided I had enough. After walking uphill for what felt like a while I looked up and saw a marker with the number '1' on a tree. I really hoped that this didn't mean 1 kilometre, because it was hot and I was sweating and felt like I had walked 3. I figured they must have started counting at a different place than I had. The road I was walking on was a sandy, gravelly logging road that continued to go uphill. Every once in a while a logging truck would pass, but I didn't bother hitchhiking partly because I felt like I needed to make the trek, but mostly because I knew they probably couldn't stop on this road on such an incline. Whenever I heard a truck I got as far off the road as I could, and dust kicked up everywhere. All the green leafy plants on the side of the road were covered in a thick film of road dust.

I had been right earlier about the day being hot. Pretty soon I realized that I hadn't been in the position earlier to determine if I had enough water- I had not been walking uphill in the sun in the middle of the day. I let myself take small sips of the water and zig-zagged back and forth across the road for the small bit of the shade that occasionally appeared. The signs with numbers started coming faster and faster, and even though I was still going uphill, and still thirsty, I felt like I was accomplishing the distance. A website had guessed that Blakeburn was 4-5 miles away from Coalmont. I decided that the 10 sign in Coalmont was probably in kilometres, since that roughly made sense, though I know that when people are used to driving, 5 km can easily seem to be 10km or 1 km, whereas when walking it's quite different. I had walked about 1 km to get to Granite City, and possibly another between Granite City and where the signs counting the distance had started, so I figured that at around sign 8 I should be looking for Blakeburn. At about 7.5, when I was getting excited about the town, I felt like I was seeing a vision or something,

because a pipe shot water out of the side of a hill beside the road. By this point I was very thirsty and low on water. I walked over to it, trying to figure if there was some way this could be what I thought it was- spring water. It didn't smell or look like waste water. I filled my smaller, empty bottle with the water and tentatively tasted it. It tasted like the water my roommate drinks, so I figured it probably was spring water. I drank a bunch but decided not to fill both my bottles with the ice cold beverage in case it was contaminated. I continued walking until just past the 8.5 marker when a pickup rounded the bend. I flagged down the driver since I hadn't seen any sign of the town and, looking surprised and concerned to see me, he pulled over and asked if everything was okay. I said I was fine, and asked if he knew where Blakeburn was. He looked stumped for a second, and then asked if I was looking for the old mining site. I replied I was looking for the ghost town, and he told me to get in the car, I had missed the small turn off to the town part. I was currently walking by the mine site, which was far below us in a valley, and not much to look at. The man was the logging supervisor for the area, and filled me in on some of the history, pointing out areas of interest. At the water pipe he stopped and filled up a large jug to bring home for his wife, noting that all the locals get their water from this pipe which connects to a spring. A little further down, at around 6.5, he pointed out a dirt path that led down to most of what was left of Blakeburn, cabins and such. On the other side of the road, he said, was a path I could follow part of the way back to town, which was the path that coal in buckets took back to town along cables. He said some of the old wooden towers, which I had seen pictures of, still existed. There was also a field which used to be their baseball diamond.

I thanked him, really grateful for the help and instruction, and began down the path to the cabins. Blakeburn had been almost completely taken back by the forest. A large wood building was slowly falling down side of the cliff. I wondered if it was connected to the coal transportation, since it lined up perfectly with the path the supervisor had pointed out to me. In addition to that was an old, rough picnic table with kids' carvings in it. Close to the table was an old outhouse. I walked through the forest, coming across some cabins in various states of disrepair and assorted faded lumber.

I sat down at the picnic table for a rest, wrote some postcards and felt like I had made an accomplishment, that I deserved the ghost town. I was pretty tired and happy and celebrated with lots of water and snacks. After I finished looking around a little more, the air was starting to cool down a little and I realized it was getting to the late afternoon. I headed up to the path that the supervisor had pointed out. I noticed there was another path nearby that was larger, but felt sure this footpath was the one he mentioned. I walked on it for a ways, coming across another cabin in the woods. I did not find any towers though, and the path seemed to end at the logging road a couple of kilometres down. I walked back the

rest of the way, which was much easier since it was downhill and not so hot, and because I had accomplished my goal. In record time! The hike back into town was nice but not eventful. Coalmont seemed as empty as when I left it, but when I walked by the hotel, a voice piped up asking if I made it all the way. I looked around and saw the son of the man who had given me a ride, along with his silent father. I replied that I had and that it had been pretty interesting, describing briefly what was left. The father grunted and the son wished me a good trip home.

A logging truck driver picked me up after only a few minutes on the mostly empty highway, and drove me all the way back to Abbotsford. Talking about Coalmont he brought up the hotel and joked about how it was owned by the Hell's Angels. I guess that is why the father and son weren't local.

Part ii

Less than a week later I had booked some time off work, and decided to use it to go to Ghost Valley, where many of BC's ghost towns are concentrated. I spent the time between trips frantically reading as much as I could and working, and I ended up forgetting to tell a lot of people I was going away. I even left the house without the list of towns I wanted to see, luckily remembering just as I began walking down the street.

Getting There (half the fun?)

Hitchhiking out of Vancouver was slow, it took me three rides and five hours to get to Chilliwack, which is about an hour and a half away. My plan was to hitchhike to North Bend, BC and ride the train from there to Kamloops, since I figured it would be a lot easier to catch a train in a smaller yard there, than in the large originating yards in Vancouver, of which there are many. After I got out of Chilliwack, it was mostly smooth sailing. After Hope, highway 1 heads north and is a lot smaller and people are usually going to small communities and used to hitchhikers. Whenever I am heading to Hope, I get a kick out of writing it on my sign, because I look like I am writing 'God Bless' or some other religious thing on my sign, instead of a location. Outside of Hope, a middle aged woman in a small car pulled over and offered me a ride to Yale "If I didn't mind riding with Jesus." At first I wasn't sure if she was joking, and I almost said without thinking that I would ride with just about anyone, but I managed to bite my tongue and reply enthusiastically in the positive. I tried to steer the conversation towards the pets (God's creatures) that she saved instead of the people she saved for the 25 minute ride. She was really kind and all but she had that evangelical look in her eyes. I don't know why I told her I was Jewish, because I usually just go along with people to keep them quiet. We ended up at her home, which was right on the highway. It was one of those amazing creations that is overwhelmingly decorated in woodsy ornaments celebrating

Christ. I also met a little balding kitten that she saved from death by neglect.

Just down the street from her house, I was picked up by a dude with a silver cobra gear shifter. He was on a road trip to see family up north and drove me the rest of the way to Boston Bar, the town across a bridge from small North Bend. He dropped me off, and I follow the signs for the 30 minute walk across the water to North Bend. Along the road to the bridge, an older middle-aged man with long curly yellowy-white hair passed me on a racing bike. I noticed his thick yellow suspenders and red shirt and guessed he was a local character of sorts. Just a little ahead of me he stopped his bike in the middle of the road. I continued walking and as I approached him, he mumbled something about a cigarette to me. I thought he was asking for one, so I said I didn't smoke. He stared at me like what I said made no sense and gestured for me to come over. As I stood in front of him, he inspected me and repeated that I didn't smoke with incredulity, as if it was a joke, or somehow suspicious. He pulled out a pouch of tobacco and waved it around a little. He mumbled some other questions, and I wasn't sure if the reason he seemed to not make sense was because I wasn't hearing him correctly. He seemed to pause a lot, expecting an answer to an unasked questions, or pondering something that I never said. He asked if I was hopping a freight and tried to convince me to come with him to "the big rock". He volunteered that he knew some people that worked on the railroad. I recalled hearing that people in North Bend did not really like outsiders, particularly those who were looking to hop trains. I wondered if this guy could help me, but I also got the feeling that he was a little off, and also drunk. I was friendly but declined his offer to go with him and continued on my way. He stayed where he was, stopped on the road where the occasional car that did pass honked at him. Eventually he rode past me and then stopped ahead of me at the bridge. As I caught up with him, he asked if I was recording our conversation. I replied in the negative and he asked aggressively if I was a liar. I asked him if he was recording the conversation, and he replied "Goddamn I'm not!" but seemed more comfortable that I had had the same concern. He started talking about all the derailments they had had, and how dangerous it was to ride trains. I had not told him that was what I was hoping to do, but it was unfortunately obvious. I stuck out like a sore thumb, North Bend is tiny and consists only of an abandoned school, a small centre, several houses and the rails. There is no road to hitchhike on, even. He continued to talk about the danger and I kept walking, hoping he would go away. The town was completely empty in the middle of a weekday- I saw no one else on the streets, though the occasional car passed through. I could not go to the train yard while Darrell was with me, so I continued walking along the road, with him alternately asking where I was taking him, and being paranoid that I was trying to get information from him. I decided that the way to get rid of him would not be to ask, because he had already

told me that people here didn't like outsiders and that he could turn them against me. I didn't necessarily believe that, but I also didn't want him alerting people to my presence here. I said I wanted a shady spot to sit and read, and found a good spot in the school yard. He continued to try to get my attention, and I would answer some of his questions, but mostly stayed quiet and read, hoping he would get bored of me. He asked if I drank and I said no and then, flabbergasted said "You don't drink. You don't smoke. What do you do?" "I read." I answered, and continued with my book. Then he started asking if I had weapons on me. He continued to ask if I had had a good boot to the teeth before, asking if I would like the shit kicked out of me by the locals. I was calm and answered his questions honestly, except for the one about weapons which I avoided. I think he was trying to make me angry so I would talk with him, which is kind of sad, but I was also feeling a little intimidated as he had a good 60 lbs on me and this was his town, far away from where anyone knew I was, and pretty unpopulated. He asked me what I would do if he told me to get out, so I looked up for a minute and told him I would go back to Boston Bar because the way he was talking was making me uncomfortable. All of a sudden he was all smiles and said he would walk me back. I told him not to. He started riding his bike behind me, chatting it up, and I said I didn't want to talk with him anymore. He rode past me and I looked for a place to hide out for a while to make sure he was really gone. I found some woods at the back of a field where I could kind of watch the trains, and not be seen too easily. I hung out for a long time, seeing no action on any front, trains or Darrell-wise. After a while I thought I would find a better place to watch the trains and walked around that area a little. It was getting late in the day and I had been within the view or hearing distance of the trains since the early afternoon. Something seemed off, since every east bound train for both major rail companies was supposed to go through here, and I hadn't seen one. I walked down a dirt road parallel to the train yard and saw an old couple out on their porch. I waved to them and the old woman scowled at me and stared. I continued walking and found a perfect spot by the tracks and sat and waited. My spot was close to where I thought the trains would stop, and was unique because between me and the road was a small thicket with a stream running through it which protected me from view of people on the road. The thicket was not big enough that there would be a trail there, and the danger of someone walking though, but definitely big enough to hide me well. Some other brush and plants hid me from the sides and from the view of the train. I saw for a while, trying to read before it got too dark. As it got later, I put away my book and lay down in the grass to wait and think. It was weird that there still hadn't been a train at all. I decided that I would look around for a worker in a little while to ask about trains, but I was doubtful that I would find anyone since I had not seen anyone working during the daytime even. I heard some branches break in the thicket and felt a little creeped-out. The

whole town felt unfriendly , and I can understand not wanting to have dumbass kids coming into your town and hopping trains but something else felt weird. I guessed I was probably more shaken up about my encounter with Darrell than I had thought before or something. In the city I am used to having people be weird, but I guess I feel secure because I am around other people and in familiar surroundings. I am definitely a city kid, and when I don't have a lot of people around I guess I feel unprotected. I heard some more snapping of branches behind me and tried to figure out what was going on- the thicket seemed too small to have a large animal in it, plus the edges were steep, and just went straight down to the small stream of water. I peered into trees again, and saw a person, dressed all in black, scrambling up the other side, away from the water. I couldn't figure out what they could possibly be doing but it made me feel more creepy. I walked over to the road but did not see them leave the trees. It got completely dark quickly and I lay down in the grass but didn't feel like sleeping. I know it takes patience to catch a train, but usually trains I can't catch will go by, or they won't stop. Here it was nothing at all. I heard some more snapping branches behind me and decided I had had enough. I walked down the road to see if I could see any workers. No surprise that I could not. I decided to do something extravagant, and that I had never done before. I walked over to Boston Bar and rented myself a hotel room for \$46. It was basically the most awesome thing ever. I stayed up late in this crummy room above a bar watching South Park, and part of a Michael J. Fox movie, and drinking microwaved water (because there were boil orders). Yeah for being a yuppie!

In the morning, I was picked up by a gruff prospector who had driven out there at 4:30 AM to look for gold. He had turned around and come back because two people who were fishing had infringed on his privacy by being near him while he was panning. He had the last laugh though, he proudly informed me, because they had used his rope to get down the steep cliff, and without them realizing, he had removed the rope on the way up. He called them, and everyone on the road dogfuckers except when he just said they fucking fucked dogs. It was awesome. After a bit he mentioned that he had retired from working at CP and wanting him to keep speaking about it, I said I had heard there had been some derailments lately. He called the CN people dogfuckers and then proceeded to tell me that a CN bridge had broke so that CN and CP were using the CP tracks instead of the CN tracks like usual. The CN ones were the ones I had been waiting at. Maybe there had been some truth to what Darrell had been saying, though he wasn't relaying information to me in a useful way. On the way drive to Hope I saw an eastbound train at a siding and almost asked my speeding ride to pull over and let me out, but then didn't and wished I had.

I walked through Hope, and then some kilometres further to the junction

between the 3 and the 5, which was an unfortunately long walk. A woman driving with a younger man pulled up and let me in. Bea was Joe's mother's friend and he lived in her basement. She spent the entire trip from outside Hope to Vernon telling Joe what was appropriate and inappropriate and trying to "teach him some class". It was a long ride, and they were incredibly kind to go out of their way to drop me off in Vernon, when they were going to Salmon Arm. Our topics of conversation ranged from the basic to the personal, such as Joe's father's recent suicide, to political topics we saw eye to eye on, like the power of pharmaceutical companies, to the homophobic and racist rants I get so used to hearing hitchhiking.

In Vernon I called up my good friends Carter and Marie-Geneviève who were staying with M-G's parents just outside of Vernon, and we drove around town, experiencing that nothing much was open on a Saturday night there, and then went back to her parents' for the night. I was excited to see them, but felt a little weird about showing up unannounced at the 'rents' place, since M-G and I dated for a longish while, and then broke up 6 months ago, and a while after her and Carter started dating. Carter is my close friend and also roommate. I have always been completely happy about the situation, but people's parents make me feel awkward in the best of times, and I wasn't sure what they would think about me showing up at their place like that and then sleeping in the room with Carter and M-G. It was cool though, and we ended up staying up late watching the KISS movie *Detroit Rock City* and, appropriately enough, talking about which of our mutual friends we would kiss. Yeah!

In the morning, a mining kid coming back from Prince George picked me up in his car full of CDs and random shit, probably everything he owns, or a lot of it. As soon as he picked me up, he muttered that he needed to get gas and then drove by a couple gas stations. The gas gauge on his truck was completely on empty, and had been since I had been in the truck, so I decided to just say that I would offer to pay for gas but I only had a couple dollars on me. That way I could bring it up without sounding like an ass.

He pulled over to a farm and traded a set of wrenches for 10 gallons of gas, which didn't manage to even get the gauge off E, but at least got us to his buddy's place outside of Fauquier, where he dropped me off so he could get some gas from his buddy. He apologized that he couldn't bring me inside, but that his friend was "kind of sketchy" and would probably shoot me since he didn't know me. I understood. A lot of people grow a lot of pot around there. He said he would pick me up if I was still there when he got back, and I was just as happy since had been creeping along slowly to save gas, and going in neutral down hills.

Not long afterwards a van full of 18-20 year old country boys picked me up on their way to Nakusp, which is still a village, but a largish one, and which was hosting the Mud Bogs this weekend. I think the Mud Bogs has

to do with trucks driving through mud, while people watch. They were all drunk, and really excited about the Mud Bogs. It was a pretty fun ride, including a free ferry trip, and singing along to Aerosmith and Metallica. Unfortunately parts included me being horrified to be with them while they cat-called and whistled at girls around and on the ferry. They stopped for a grizzled old hitchhiker as well who looked glad to be picked up and handed a beer.

New Denver, my first real destination, was a mere 47 km from Nakusp, so I felt like I was home free. After trying and failing for an hour to get a ride, I walked over to a nearby gas station for some cardboard. There was no outdoor recycling so I went inside to ask for cardboard and was informed that they don't have cardboard there, after they avoided even asking me what I wanted for the longest time. I found out afterwards that Nakusp is notoriously bad for hitchhiking. Thirty minutes later a man with a small car piled full of stuff moved enough of his belongings aside for me to get in and we got going. He sympathized with my difficulty in getting a ride and told me he hitchhiked to the Yukon last year for a job. Immediately I assumed he was a laborer so I was surprised when, after I asked, he said he was a financial consultant. He must have seen my confusion because he explained that he had hitchhiked up there as a young guy and then decided to do it again for work as an adventure. After a couple days, though, he had bought a bus ticket and then finding that uncomfortable, a car to drive himself the rest of the way. I thought about how much easier it is for me, looking fairly small and clean cut, and younger than I am to hitchhike compared to an older man. He called a friend in Kaslo, and arranged to meet up with him so he could drop me off in New Denver which was on the way, instead of the town he was heading for on the way. In New Denver he pointed me the way towards Silverton, saying it was only a kilometre away, and that I would be interested in seeing it. Marie-G's dad had mentioned Silverton to me as well, saying it might have abandoned mines around still, and it was a town that I had mentally added to my list even though it was just south of New Denver instead of along the 31A.

New Denver (El Dorado)

Like Coalmont, New Denver is listed as a ghost town in ghost town books, but it is not truly one, nor has it ever been though it shares some characteristics with ghost towns. It was my first stop because of its location, at the junction of highway 6 from Vernon and the 31A, BC's ghost town highway, and the beginning of the Ghost Valley (though this is debatable, since I have also seen Three Forks, a ghost town site, listed as the gateway to the valley of the ghosts). New Denver has a really varied and interesting history, from a village dependent on the nearby mining industry to a home for Doukhobors, Russian Christian anarchists

to an internment camp for people of Japanese descent during and after World War 2. It used to be called El Dorado, but was renamed New Denver when the inhabitants predicted it would grow bigger than Denver, CO. Right now about 600 people live there.

I got a loaf of fresh bread, and found an empty lot with some black and red picnic tables and a chess board with pieces the size of toddlers. I sat down and ate half a loaf of bread and half a can of beans. Feeling very satisfied, I decided to head to Silverton and then back here in the morning. I had spoken to the grocery store cashier about where to find more information about ghost towns in the area and she suggested the museum which I found down the street, and which would be open at 10:30 the next morning. Walking along the streets of New Denver, I could see the tourist industry was pretty influential and strong, but it was still a neat place if you could get past that. It was no ghost town, though. Just beyond the olde tyme buildings lining the highway, there were suburban-style lawns and families visiting the beach for the long weekend.

Silverton

As I suspected the '1 kilometre' to Silverton was actually 5 kilometres, but I was happy for the walk. It was the evening, and cool, and walking along the lake with a hazy view of the mountains made me not even bother to try getting a ride with the few cars that passed. Silverton was a lot like New Denver, which makes me wonder why people recommended it so much more highly than New Denver. Silverton either used to be, or almost was a ghost town, and was revived by tourism. Like New Denver it is listed as a ghost town in books. One way to tell if somewhere is really a ghost town is to go to the Canada Post postal service website and do a postal code look up. If Canada Post can find a postal code for the location then people live there. Luckily I had done this, and knew that places like New Denver and Silverton might have interesting stuff around them, or historical information, and that other places that I was heading to were real ghost towns. Otherwise I would have been pretty disappointed. Silverton has a great outdoor museum of old pieces of machinery scavenged from the silver mines that surround it. It's basically a park filled with interested pieces of metal with gears and stuff, and it's free and always open. Outside the historical society building are pamphlets that explain how each piece was used. Frank Mills, a deceased member of the community, pretty much hauled all the pieces down from the mines, I believe. Unfortunately the historical society did not have open hours listed on the door, but I hoped they would be open so I could ask about abandoned mines in the area. I walked around Silverton a bit, noticing the many families camping for the long weekend. I found a secluded spot on the rocky beach and read my book for a while, and looked at the mountains. It was all pretty beautiful. I slept near the beach,

GHOSTLY GHOST TOWN MAP

(props to the
dinosaur dinosaur
map)



- road/highway
- - - logging / unimproved road
- ... ferry
- town/ghost town/ghost town site

⊙ ghost eyeball

leering ghost mouth



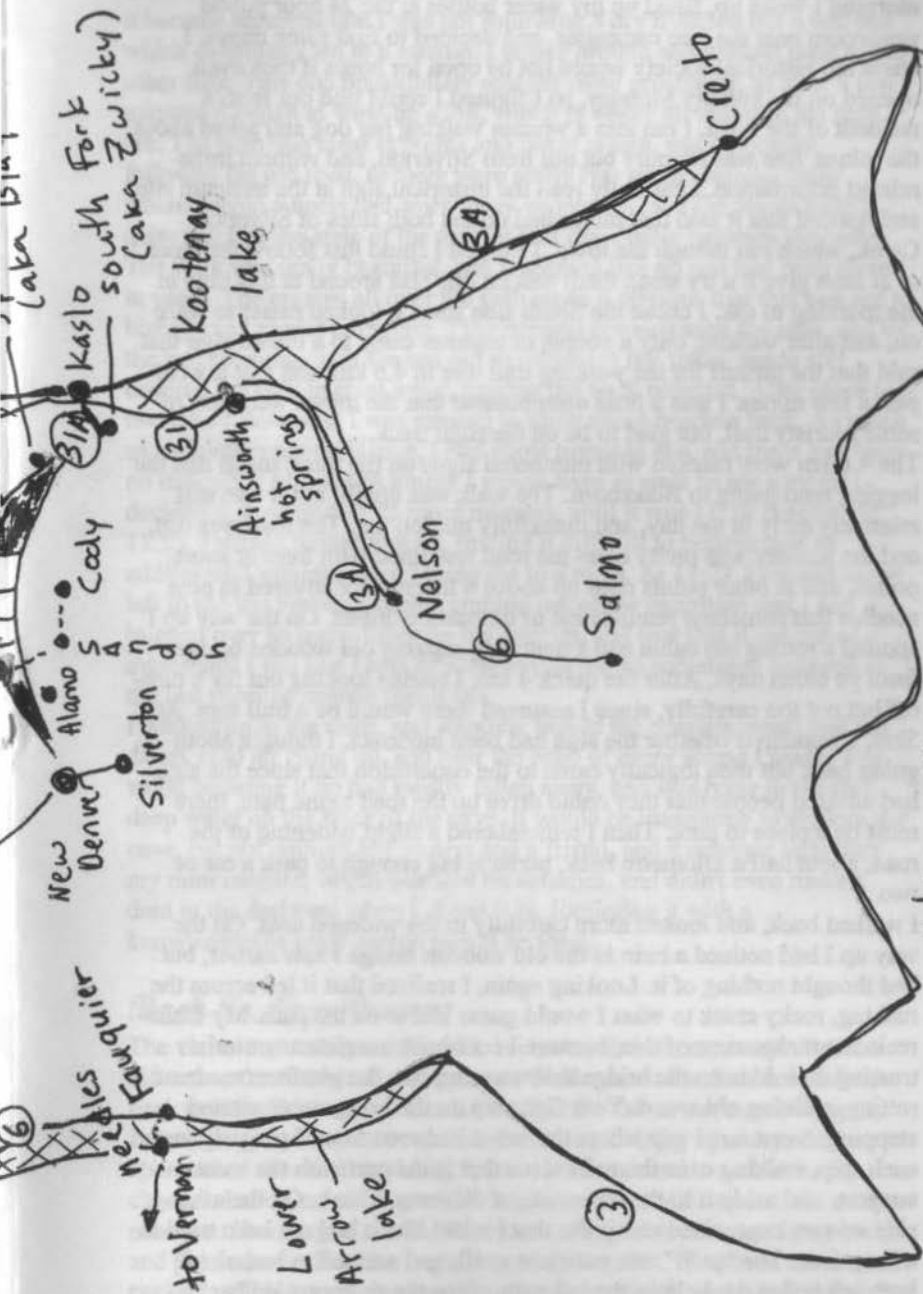
Upper Arrow lake

Nakuse

300

Lardo

Three Forks
Zincion
Bear
city lake
Retallack (whitewater)
Coke
soroules lake



not exactly to scale. for novelty purposes only.

but far away from the sanctioned campsites full of families. Early in the morning I woke up, filled up my water bottles at the 24 hour public washroom near the free campsites, and decided to find some mines. I knew the historical society would not be open for hours if they even opened on the holiday Monday, so I figured I could find out from a resident of the town. I ran into a woman walking her dog and asked about the mines. She was friendly but not from Silverton, and without mine-related information. I carefully read the historical sign at the museum site and noticed that it said that mines had dotted both sides of Silverton Creek, which ran through the town. I figured I could just follow the creek, or at least give it a try since there was no one else around at this time in the morning to ask. I chose the South side since it looked easier to walk on, and after walking only a couple of minutes came to a brown sign that said that the turnoff for the walking trail was in 4.6 km, and that it went past a few mines. I was a little disappointed that the mines were part of some touristy trail, but glad to be on the right track.

The 4.6 km were marked with numbered signs on the trees, much like the logging road going to Blakeburn. The walk was uphill, but it was still relatively early in the day, and thankfully not too hot. The road was dirt, and the scenery was pretty nice- the road was lined with trees at some points, and at other points rises up above a forest floor covered in pine needles that somehow reminds me of dinosaur exhibits. On the way up I spotted a rotting old cabin and a matching sagging old wooden bridge from yesteryears. After the quick 4 km, I started looking out for a turn-off but not too carefully, since I assumed there would be a trail sign. At 5km, I wondered whether the sign had been incorrect. I thought about going back but then logically came to the conclusion that since the sign had advised people that they could drive up the road to the path, there must be a place to park. Then I remembered a slight widening of the road, about half a kilometre back, perhaps big enough to park a car or two.

I walked back, and looked more carefully in the widened area. On the way up I had noticed a twin to the old wooden bridge I saw earlier, but had thought nothing of it. Looking again, I realized that it led across the rushing, rocky creek to what I would guess had to be the path. My brain reeled to make sense of this, because I could not imagine any tourists trusting their kids on the bridge that was simply a flat platform made of rotting, splitting old wood. Your first step on the bridge necessitated stepping over a large gap where the wood had rotted out. I gingerly tested each step, walking over the nails since that is the part with the most support, and made it to the other side of Silverton Creek. On the other side was an improvised camp site that looked like it had not been used in a long time. The "path" was not clear at all, and seemed to branch off both left and right. I chose the left path, since the right one led back towards Silverton. As I walked, the path became less and less clear. Initially it was just a narrow strip that contained grasses but no trees or

shrubs. As it went on, even that was not clear, and I wondered if I was following a figment of my imagination or a dry riverbed. A little later on, it became apparent that I was not following a dry riverbed but a wet one which eventually led to a swamp. I turned around and walked back to the other fork. This one immediately seemed more promising, as after a few minutes it began to wind up a hill, which is where all mines in the area are. The path was clear at points and not at others, and obviously followed the old road, as there were really two small, parallel paths where wagon wheels had worn away vegetation, and the plants hadn't quite reached the state of the grasses that grew taller between the paths. The walk was really beautiful, and it seemed like no one had been there in years. The grasses all over the path made it obvious that this was not a highly-used tourist attraction. Tiny streams criss-crossed the path, and by the late morning, with the sun out in (close to) full force, shade still covered the path in most areas, making the walk pleasant. After close to two hours, however, I was starting to think about heading back. As much as walking in nature is nice, I had ghost towns to see, and there had been no indication how much longer I would have to walk to see a mine. I decided to give myself 15 more minutes, until it was 11:30 exactly. At 11:25, I almost turned around, finding it difficult to believe that an additional 5 minutes would bring me to a mine. At 11:27, I looked to my left to see the burbling stream coming out of the mountain that I had jumped over so many times on my way up, and saw that it ran out of a mineshaft! I felt like I was in some movie where something happens at the last possible minute that it can.

I walked up to the mine, and standing beside the opening could feel the damp, cold air rising up, and hear the echo of every sound I made. The wood boarding it up had mostly fallen away, and was lying in the calf-deep water on the floor of the cave. It would be interesting to explore the cave, but not without hip waders and a friend, and a stronger light than my mini maglite, which was low on batteries, and didn't even make a dent in the darkness when I shone it in. Exploring it with a knowledgeable local person would be ideal.

Back To New Denver

The victorious and downhill walk back was shorter, as always. Back at Silverton, the historical society was still closed so I walked/hitchhiked back to New Denver, and headed straight for the museum, crossing my fingers that it was open even though it was a holiday Monday. As I approached the small building, I saw movement inside and inwardly cheered. Inside, an older gentleman greeted me and I inquired about the museum. He charged me the \$1 student rate, which is an amazing deal, and pointed me off to the beginning of the exhibit. The small museum is packed with information about New Denver's rich history, and also about some of the surrounding area, like Sandon. The museum consisted of a

lot of old photographs, which I love to see, and themed rooms set up with mostly donated artifacts from earlier times.

Downstairs, I chatted it up a little with the museum gentleman, after finding that he was knowledgeable about the ghost towns of the area, and had an idea of which were more likely to have any remaining structures. He also was able to give me relatively accurate distances to the towns, which was important.

Sandon

Sandon is unique in that it is difficult to say whether it is a ghost town or not. It was completely abandoned in the past, but a very small community of people live there now. The people that do live there mostly seems to take care of the historical buildings- the last remaining brothel of many and the doctor's house.

From what I had read, I was expecting Sandon to pander to tourists and be less interesting and authentic than other places, but I was happily surprised to see that what the community did was tasteful and was geared more towards making historical information accessible than making a hokey tourist attraction. Sandon's past is fascinating, making it a great candidate for historical preservation. It used to be the roughest mining town around, with lots of riches to be made and lots of "painted women". It was burned to the ground and resuscitated multiple times.

I started my walk down the ghostly 31A, wondering if I would end up walking the 13km to Sandon, and then the additional 5-6 km to Cody. I had decided that I would try to get to Cody that evening, since it was a true ghost town, and Sandon had people living there, and things that may be closed. I figured I had walked over 20 km that morning on the way to and from the mine, and I was starting to feel it. I had known that wearing cheap, thin soled shoes was not the smartest thing, but had not wanted to mess up my other shoes which I use for work. The blisters were getting pretty bad. After a few kilometres, a pickup pulled over, and two old men with full heads of white hair invited me to sit between them. We had a delightful conversation, as I tried to figure out if they were lovers. All signs point to yes, which is rad.

A young francophone couple drove me the last few kilometres to Sandon. There, I stopped in briefly at the store and chatted briefly with the store keeper. Initially I felt some suspicion on his behalf, either that I was going to steal something, or maybe just the tired resentment of tourists. To counter this, I asked if I could buy a walking tour pamphlet, which I thought might be free or a few cents. It seems like if you ask to buy something, people soften up to you a little, especially if they think you are stealing. I wanted this man to help me out. He apologized, saying that he was out of pamphlets but that I could go to the museum to get one. This was funny because I had thought the little store was the museum. Though they also sell disposable cameras and chocolate bars, the store is

filled with memorabilia and informational postings about Sandon and its history. I guess he could see my excitement when I rushed out the door. I walked up the road to the museum, and saw that I only had 5 minutes to closing. The woman at the door was just turning around the "closed" sign when I started waving frantically. Warily she opened the door and told me I could look around for 9 minutes only. I explained that I just wanted the self-guided tour pamphlet. She offered me the Sandon Paystreak, the thin newspaper which includes a large middle spread dedicated to the points of interest in town. Additionally, there are interesting articles about Sandon's history and present state, and in my issue, Vol 12, No. 1, great information about surrounding ghost towns. At my request she gave me quick directs to Cody and then I left her to close up. I walked around a little bit, looking at the paper map for guidance, but I wanted to head to Cody. Unfortunately I was not clear about the museum woman's directions and she was gone now. I headed back to the store, and wondered whether I should bother the man inside again. He came out, closing up shop, and I waved. He walked over and asked if I was just walking. I guess he didn't realize that before, and it made a world of difference. He talked about the tourists, which meant he didn't think of me as one, and told me that to the locals, "picking up hitchhikers is a way of life". There are no buses that go out there, so if you don't have a vehicle, you depend on others. He told me how to get to Cody, and estimated it was a kilometre away. Remembering that the other man in New Denver had said 5-6, I filed both distances in my mind, and began walking down the road.

Cody

Cody was one of the places I was most excited to go to. It was one of the few ghost towns in the area that had not been destroyed by intentional or unintentional fire in the 1980s or earlier. This is probably because it is pretty far off the beaten path, down a logging road from Sandon. Cody was a smaller mining centre which showed promise until an important Sandon figure constructed a trail that connected several mines to Sandon, bypassing Cody to protect his investments. Two hundred people live in Cody at one time, but it has been abandoned since the 1950s.

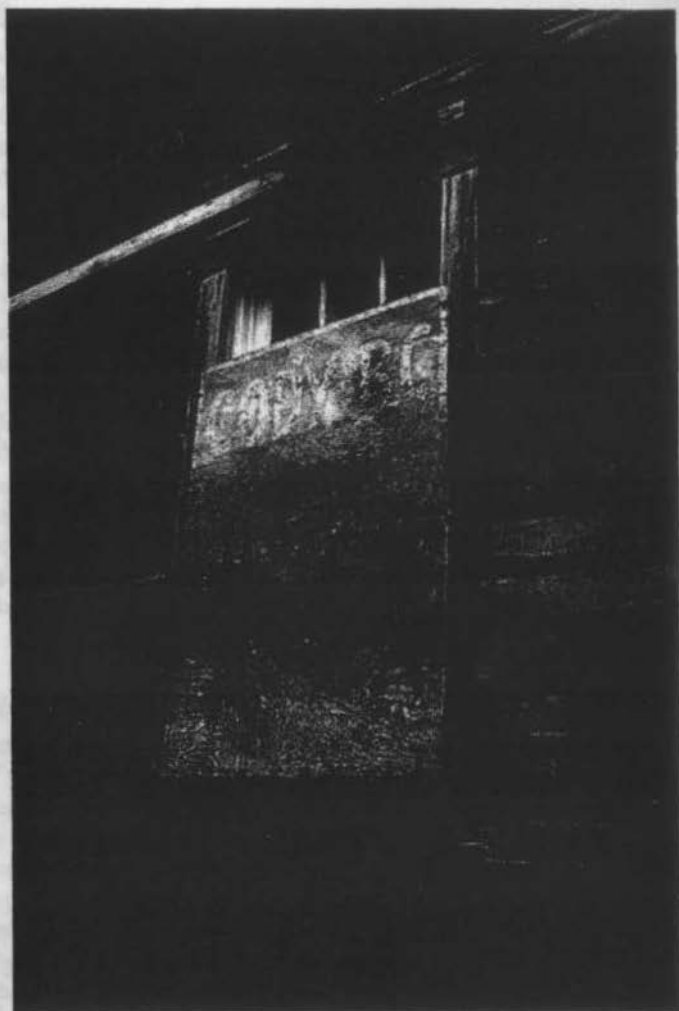
The road to Cody was uphill, but not bad at all since it was the cooler evening. As I walked the road from a semi-ghost town to a true ghost town, I felt like I was probably the first person to see this trail, except perhaps logging truck drivers. I passed over the water and continued down the road further and further, wishing I had confirmed that I did not have to turn off anywhere to find Cody. There were several small paths leading off the main road, but I stuck to the road, hoping it would take me to town. After about 5 kilometres, I started to feel discouraged, and

imagined returning the next day to Sandon without having found Cody. I scanned the trees, trying to see if I could be walking right by the town. I didn't know if it would be like Blackburn, and nearly impossible to find without a local. I decided that if I didn't see something soon, I would perhaps begin heading back, or find a place to camp. I was happy to be walking in these woods that I guessed few people ever saw, I tried to tell myself. I turned a corner, and just like the Silverton mine, was delighted to see an intact, boarded up old wooden house. I was ecstatic but confused because just beyond the house was something shiny and red. It looked like a vehicle. As I rounded the corner more, I saw a line of wash and a trailer. This confused me more. I thought Cody was abandoned, but here was someone living right beside the house. I said hello to a man sitting in a lawn chair, and asked if this was Cody. The man replied that it was, and at my request, directed me to another house down the road. Up ahead I saw another man walking his dog, and across from the house another trailer. I looked around the second abandoned house, and jumping out of it (the steps to the front door were gone), surprised the man who was walking his dog back again. We chatted for a few minutes, and it dawned on me that these people didn't live here, but just wanted a clearing to set up their RVs in, where it was free, beautiful and not too far from the highway. The second man directed me to the mine (which I think was actually the concentrator), which was happily a little ways away from the RVs. I slept up there that night, and in the morning explored the large, somewhat crushed building on the top of the hill, as well as the ~~low~~^{two} houses below, and the remains of another house. The Cody houses were both in pretty good shape, considering, and at least one of them had obviously been squatted not too long ago, as in addition to the old iron bed there was a suitcase of glassy magazines, thumbled paperbacks and shoe polish, among other things.

Back to Sandon

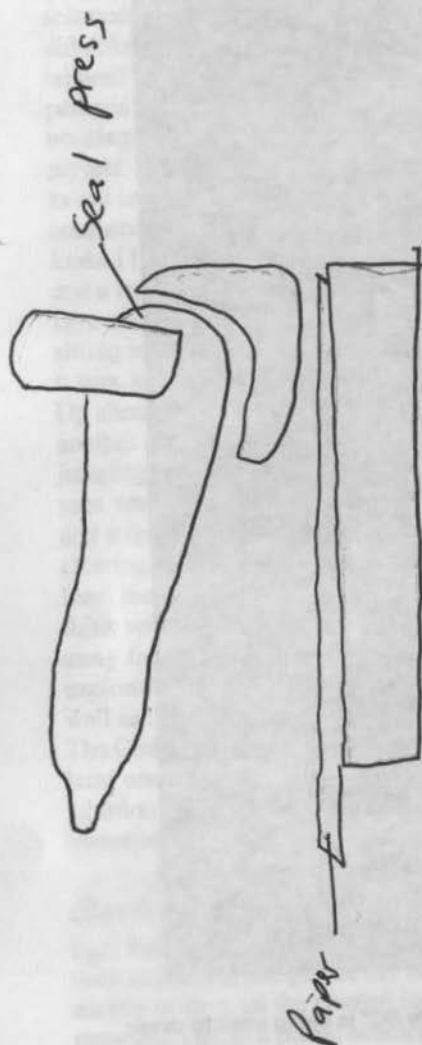
I got back to Sandon at around half-past nine, reading the tour map to note interesting things like the old rail trail, and a house that was built simply to store all the alcohol for the town in its glory days. Outside the museum, I sat at a picnic bench and read the Paystreak while I waited for the museum to open.

The museum, \$3 for students (no ID necessary), consisted of many photographs of Sandon and area, articles from the Paystreak and artifacts donated from the community upstairs and on the main floor. The woman staffing the museum was knowledgeable about the area, and there museum includes some hands-on exhibits. One of the coolest things is that you can use the old Sandon seal presses to indent small pieces of paper with Sandon seals. The basement is damp and dank, and they use this to their advantage to simulate a mine, as well as the dark and small miner's cabin with a blanket nailed to the bed for convenience.



Cody, BC: The village sign which reads "Cody BC" is being used to cover the window of this intact shack.

Outside the store, an old trolley bus is a free informational display, with the space where ads are not explaining the restoration project taking place in Sandon, where buses are fixed up and sent to museums outside of the community. The display was interesting, but perhaps a source of tension, I learned, as a passive-aggressive editorial in the *Paystreak* accused "someone" of turning Sandon into a "scrap yard for derelict buses". I stopped back into the store to thank the man who ran it, and tell him I had enjoyed Cody, but a woman was at the register, and the place was filled with a couple of tourist families.



Sandon Slocan
Power Co.
Seal



Dingwall Cotts & Co.
Seal from Sandon

Alamo

On the way back down the road towards the 31A, I was picked up by an older couple. They had stopped because the woman had recognized me- I had asked her about the mines in Silverton the previous morning while she was walking her dog. They dropped me off just at the junction of the road to Sandon and the 31A, at the Three Forks entrance to the Galena Trail, a walking/biking trail that followed the old Nakusp and Slocan (N&S) Railway route. Three Forks, listed in many ghost town books, was at the junction of Seaton, Carpenter and Kane creeks. I could not see anything left of it, and had heard nothing exists of it from someone local. The Paystreak reported that "virtually no trace of Three Forks remains", though, so there may be something there *but the Galena Trail guide says* Alamo, like Cody, likely remained because it was off the beaten path. It *says* was less easy to scavenge because motorized vehicles are prohibited on *"not a* the trail. *trace"*

Though the trail was fairly flat, Alamo sat on a steep hill. Looking over the hill is a ruined concentrator (I think), with rubble stretching much of the way down the hill. A sketchy wooden path reaches over the pile, and on the other side are a couple of old cabins, also in stages of decay. Lots of old lumber and metal bits are still here since since it is more difficult to scavenge than locations with access to roads.

Retallack- A Place I Didn't Go To

Retallack (pronounced like 'metallic') is apparently the only ghost town of many right along the 31A where a couple of buildings remain standing. The rest were destroyed somewhat by scavenging, but mostly by large fires in the 1980s. Retallack is 6.9 miles east of the turnoff to Sandon. I got frustrated with hitchhiking/walking this road, and didn't make it to Retallack. A recent picture of the two buildings shows them seemingly intact.

There is also some sort of resort in Retallack now. An alternative way to reach this town is to head over the mountain from Cody. From here you end up right by the resort. A local Sandon man (the one who gave me directions to Cody) guessed that up and down the mountain would be 26km. There is nowhere to get water outside of Sandon, and even there it is just questionable stream water, so bringing a lot of water would be a necessity for this trip. Also the guy that guessed it was 26km was the same one that thought that Cody was 1km from Sandon (it was 5ish). It would be a rad adventure though.

On the Way Home

Hitchhiking back from New Denver, I got a lot of rides with guys named Al, Mel, Wayne etc. It was good- they were mostly contemplative, quiet talkers. One appeared to be a tough laborer until you got him talking about eco-poetry. Another was putting up signs for a reunion for people

from a town that had been purposefully flooded by the government with dams to produce energy. This huge damming project in the 1960s created a number of "drowned towns" in the Kootenays, which are sort of related to ghost towns in that there is nothing left in an area that used to be inhabited. Many of the towns which were flooded were previously quite close to being ghost towns.

By nightfall I was in Vernon, and after no luck getting a night ride, I decided to sleep beside a farmer's field near some water. In the morning I got a quick ride to Kamloops in a sporty car which I am pretty sure was the most expensive car I have ever been in. The man driving the car was fascinating; one of Canada's first computer programmers, the career was something he stumbled upon before people realized how vital computers would become. He had some sort of clerical job in the 1950s or '60s, working for a large company, and when the company decided to share a computer with another company, everyone who worked there was allowed to take a test on logic. Anyone who did at all well on that was trained a little on the computer, and anyone who could understand the training somewhat became a programmer. He was one of those. He worked at a time when AT&T and The Bay (I think) combined resources to buy one computer. He talked about writing a book about it and I encouraged him to do so because his stories were amazing.

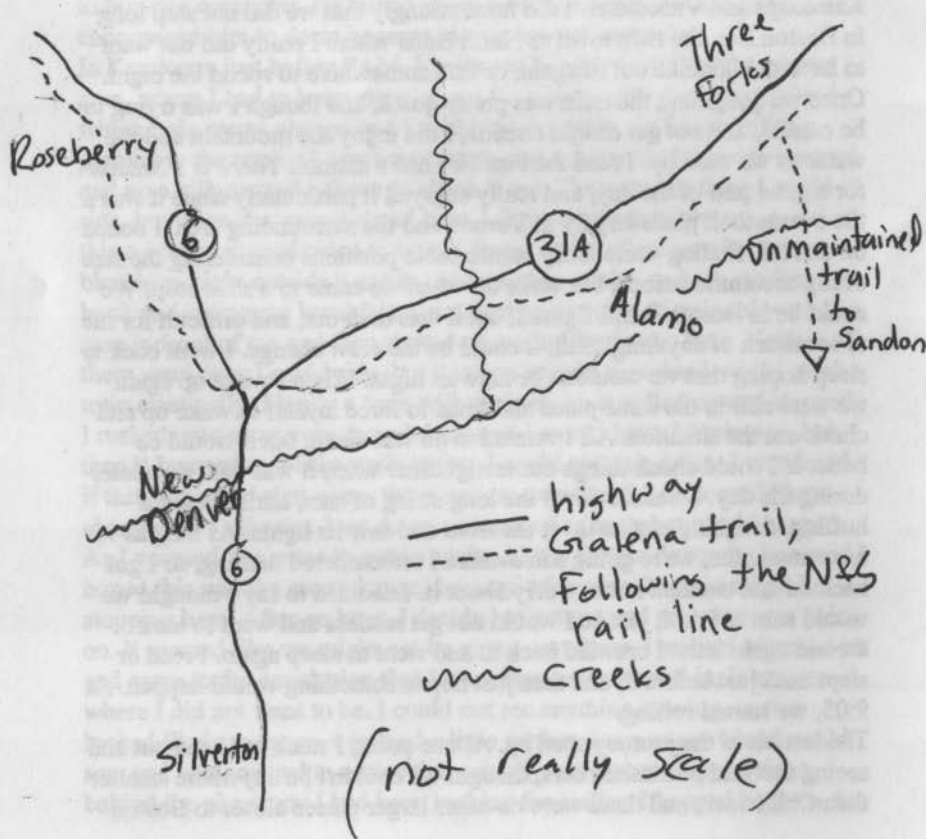
In Kamloops just before 9AM, I began walking towards the downtown area, where I had to keep my eyes out for a particular pharmacy behind which train crews change and I could catch a train. As I was walking parallel to the tracks, I saw a train stop, and I scrambled through a tunnel and up a hill, around a fence to check it out. There was nothing I could ride, but since the train stopped here, I figured others might too, and that this might be a good place to wait. I found an excellent spot by some bleachers, right outside a gap in the fenced in tracks, and sat, reading my book and eating my breakfast. I watched as a couple of trains slowed to a stop in front of me and then started up again 30 minutes later. Neither of them were ones I could ride, but this was a good sign that I would catch a train eventually. Finally a train with grainers on it pulled up and stopped. I rushed onto a car even though I figured I would have 30 minutes, but then it bumped to a start again before I could even sit down. I wondered if this was a bad sign, since there was no way that the crew could have changed in 3 minutes. I sat down and waited to see what would happen. As I guessed, we came to a stop again, a little further down the line, and I hoped this was the crew change, because otherwise the train might be stopping here. After an hour, I decided to get out and see what was going on. It seemed like we might not be going anywhere. I walked around a bit and came to the conclusion that I was completely fenced in, in an area where I did not want to be. I could not see anything moving, or that looked likely to move. I walked a little further down to see what I could see, and was amazed to notice that actually were were stopped right behind the pharmacy I had been looking for earlier. I hopped back on the

train and waited, knowing that even if that train wasn't going anywhere, I could see one that was from inside there anyways. It was actually a pretty perfect place because in the daytime there would be nowhere to be invisible in this yard. I watched trains pull up and go by. I watched others speed by without stopping. I rarely saw anything rideable except occasionally a train with a unit on the back, which was too far away for me to get to in the time they were stopped. I sat and read and lightly dozed in the little dusty compartment, and kept my eye on what was going on outside. Suddenly, the car I was in started buzzing, and I almost didn't believe we were moving. Slowly my train inched forward and I held my breath as it stopped about 10 metres away. Still, it was a good sign. An hour later the buzzing began again, and I tried not to get my hopes up, but it seemed like we were getting faster and faster. The train was only speeding up and we were out of the yard, and I looked at my watch and it had been 5 hours. I could see a little outside, and watched as the crew change office flew by. As we left the yard, going pretty quickly, I saw some frustrated looking punks with bandannas, carhartts and dread locks watching the train go by. Yeah, trainhopping kids! I felt like I was pretty home free, as there was only one crew change in between Kamloops and Vancouver. I did hope strongly that we did not stop long in Boston Bar, the twin town to North Bend where I really did not want to have to hitchhike out of again, or find somewhere to spend the night. Once we got going, the train was pretty quick, and though I was trying to be careful, and not get caught outside, I did enjoy the mountain and the water as we went by. I read the Patrick Lane's memoir *There is a Season* for a good part of the day, and really enjoyed it particularly since it was a the events took place largely in Vernon and the surrounding area. I dozed on and off, finding some fairly comfortable positions considering the size of my accommodations, but woke up when we came to a slow stop. We could be in Boston Bar, I figured, but it was dark out, and difficult for me to see much of anything. Still, it could be the crew change. I went back to sleep hoping that we wouldn't be here all night. When I woke up again we were still in the same place and I had to force myself to wake up and check out the situation. All I wanted to do was sleep, but it would be better if I could check things out at nighttime when it was dark then later during the day. I walked down the long string of cars, until I heard a huffing, coughing engine up at the front and saw its lights. As long as we have an engine, we're going somewhere I remembered hearing, so I got back on and decided not to worry about it. I decided to say I thought we would start at 9AM, just so I would not get restless and want to look around again later. I crawled back in and went to sleep again. I read or slept until just before 9, and then just hoped something would happen. At 9:05, we started rolling.

The last bit of the journey sped by. At one point, I stuck my head out and seeing the yard of mashed cars, thought we couldn't be anywhere smaller than Chilliwack, and there were no other larger places closer to Boston

Far. I figured we couldn't be as far as Chilliwack, though, so I kept my eyes out for a sign on the highway that was partly visible from the train. A sign for the turnoff to Lickman Rd. sent me to my map, which is a map of all BC, but luckily has some detailed parts of the cities on the back. There was Lickman Rd., in Chilliwack, so I was almost home, practically. Thirty or forty minutes later we were cruising to a halt in the yard. We stopped, I got off, and then shortly afterwards the train started up again. I looked up at the orange Port Mann bridge and realized my luck- my CP train had stopped in the CN yard, a yard I was at least somewhat familiar with, and also one in a much more convenient suburb to Vancouver. I hurried out of the yard, scandalized some people with my filthiness on the public transit, and arrived home.

walking / biking trail : the only way
to get to Alamo



British Columbia Ghost Town Resources

All resources are available at Vancouver Public Library.

Other resources can be found under the subject headings

ghost towns

ghost towns - british columbia

ghost towns - british columbia - history

ghost towns - british columbia - kootenay region (or other region)

Blakeburn Blog

Last updated June 2006, includes information on the struggle to make Blakeburn a heritage site, protecting it from logging.

<http://blakeburnghosttown.blogspot.com/>

Blakeburn: From Dust to Dust

Don Blake

1985

A casual account of Blakeburn's history from its beginning up until the early 80s reunion.

Ghosttowns.com

Includes a detailed BC section, describing many ghost towns in BC, what remains of them, and their accessibility as well as a links section..

<http://www.ghosttowns.com>

Ghost Towns and Drowned Towns of West Kootenay

Elsie G. Turnbull

1988

Maps and short essays on ghost towns and towns drowned by damming in this region.

Ghost Towns and Mining Camps of the Boundary Country

Garnet Basque

1992

Photos (some colour), maps and information on towns of this region.

Ghost Towns of the Pacific North

west

Philip Varney

2005

Photograph-oriented book with some text. Full colour.

Gold Trails and Ghost Towns TV series

Mid-90s TV series available on VHS.

Historian and teacher Bill Barlee discusses ghost towns with the host in a

casual manner.

Valley of the Ghosts

Don Blake

1988

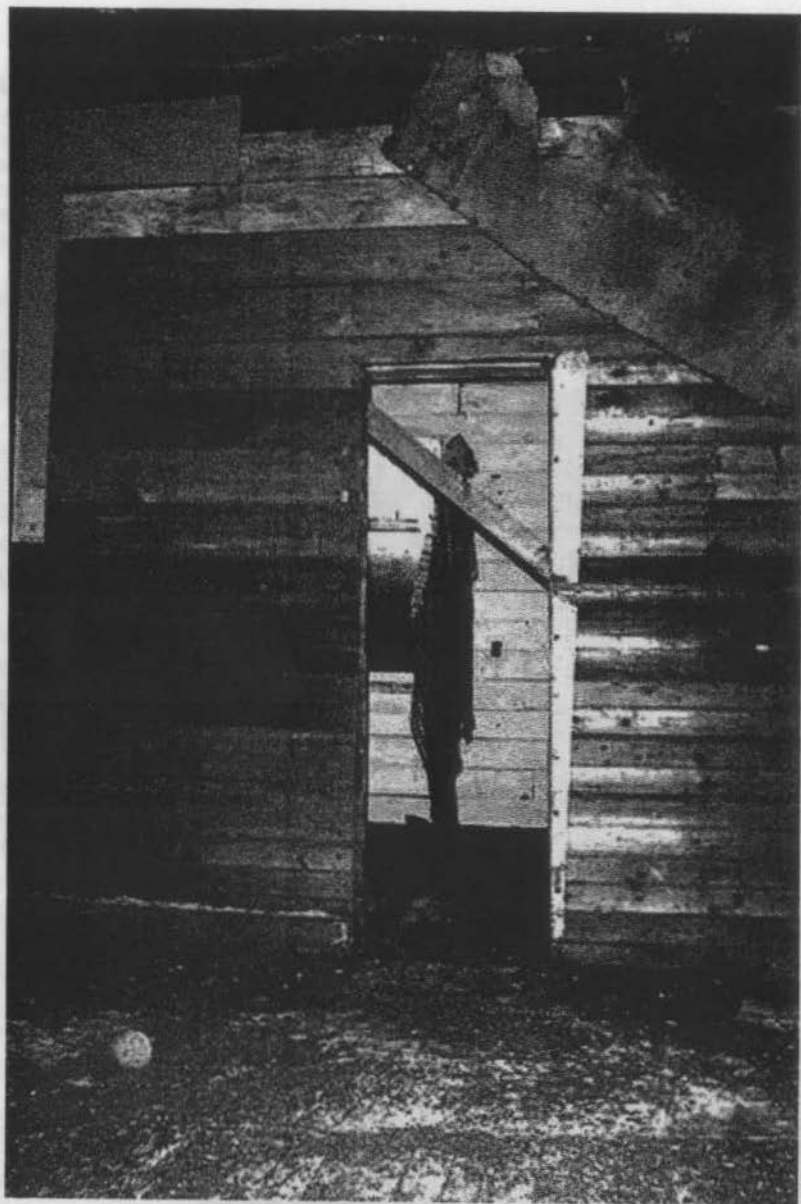
Maps, black and white photos, writing on the history of 31A.

Wings Over Canada TV series

Early 2000s TV series where the host flies to inaccessible regions of Canada to explore what is there. Many episodes include a BC ghost town. Available on DVD.



Inside the concentrator in Cody, BC



Inside a house in Cody, BC